

The Bee's Home Magazine Page

The Cause for Typhus Fever

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The World's Best Known Writer on Medical Subjects.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

Our greatest permanent advances in sanitation have been made in the fight against some fierce epidemic of pestilence, and even the savage whirlwind and hurricane of war may be followed by healing showers.

Recent dispatches from Mexico announce that General Carranza finds that one of the dragons in his path is our ancient and intimate enemy, typhus fever.

There is nothing surprising about this, because up to about fifty years ago this disease was as common as pneumonia is today all over the civilized world.

How common may be judged by two significant facts, one that our common and still disgracefully prevalent typhoid is a namesake of the older disease, its name being derived from it by the simple process of adding the Greek suffix "oid," meaning "like," and when first separated by Murchison was regarded as a variety of typhus.

The other that there is in one European hospital, that of Edinburgh, a memorial tablet erected about the middle of the last century commemorating the death in discharge of their duty of forty-five doctors, nurses and other members of the hospital staff within the last thirty years by typhus alone!

The disappearance of typhus from western Europe has been so sudden and complete as to have something almost uncanny about it.

Beginning to decline only about fifty or sixty years ago, it died down so swiftly that within thirty years it had become one of the rare diseases in England and America, while today the average physician who graduated less than twenty-five years ago has seldom seen a case of it unless studying abroad. It has come from northwestern Europe and America with almost the completeness of the great plague or black death.

The cause of this striking and delightful decline of a dangerous pestilence was for many years a mystery, but now that we have discovered it turns out to be an astounding simplicity.

Nothing more not less than the white shirt, with its necessary institutions and accompanying habits, the steam laundry, running water in the house and the tub bath. Indeed, the vernacular term, "shiled" shirt, phrases it more precisely, as the habit of boiling all human garments at frequent intervals is the keynote of the cure for the shirt, but also the chief reason that boiling kills vermin.

But how could a mere matter of personal cleanliness, almost indeed of vanity and pride of appearance, have such a vital effect upon the spread of a dangerous disease?

Because the sole cause and carrier of typhus is that loathsome parasitic insect whose name is not permitted to be mentioned in polite society.

This discovery is quite a comparatively recent affair, partly because the disease had become so rare before the science of bacteriology was born, or at least before it had got fairly on its feet, that it was difficult to secure enough material for proper investigation by laboratory methods.

To do this we had to equip expeditions and pursue it into tropical regions where it still held out, among them, Mexico, where we have just heard from it again.

In fact, we are entitled to take a national pride in this discovery, since it was chiefly due to the work of American scientists, Dr. Ricketts, of the University of Chicago, and Dr. Goldberger, and Anderson of the United States marine hospital service.

All of them risked their lives in the service of humanity, as the disease is frightfully contagious to all who come in contact with its carriers, and Dr. Ricketts, alas, actually laid down dying from the bite of an infected insect only a few weeks after he had announced his discovery of the cause of the fever, thus literally, in the language of the earlier martyrs, "sealing his testimony with his blood."

The habit which most greatly discourages the parasitic typhus pest is that of wearing white or light colored shirts and underwear, which show the dirt readily and have to be frequently changed.

The chief merit of the old brown, or blue, or gray shirts and underwear was that they didn't show dirt and didn't need to be changed so often. Incidentally, also, the diminishing use of wool for underwear and shirtings has helped in exterminating vermin cover for woolen fabrics furnish better cover for the same, are more difficult to clean and it is not considered advisable to boil them very frequently for fear of causing shrinkage.

If we had needed any proof of the close connection between the two—clean shirts a week and bath-on-Saturday-night habit, and freedom from vermin and typhus, the acute breakdown of civilization across the Atlantic has supplied it at once.

One of the first steps of that relapse into barbarism, called war, is the breaking up or serious interference with all habits of personal cleanliness.

The thing that the soldiers in the trenches on both sides complain of most bitterly is not the shells, nor the bayonet attacks of the enemy, but, first, the mud, and, second, the swarms of vermin which infest them.

The reason is plain: trench fighting among other peculiarities means that the soldiers on the first line are compelled to stand and fire or crouch down and sleep day and night for five days, ten days, two and three weeks at a stretch, without a single opportunity of changing their clothing or getting a decent wash.

Even when they are laid off for their term in reserve, to sleep and wash and clean up, washing of their clothing is extremely difficult, because the display of it in drying will instantly catch the eye of hostile air scouts and draw a shower of shells.

The result is that all imaginable vermin riot through the trenches as they did in the Dark Ages. And as a natural, logical consequence within three months of the declaration of war typhus had broken out furiously along the southern parts of the eastern front, raged all through Serbia and Austria and even made several outbreaks in the German camps.

Flounces, Reminiscent of the "Traviata" Scheme of Dress, Will Replace Overdraperies, Which Have Outworn Fashion's Favor



PHOTO BY INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE

Semi-fitting elaborate negligee, made of peach, Carmel, coat of silver lace, lace and pearls, coat of self-material.

By GERMAINE GAUTIER.

There is a disposition to get away from overdressed effects such as have been thrust upon one's patient notice for the last month or two. It is not that draperies are unattractive in themselves, but they have lacked variety in their arrangements, and so a return to certain of the flounced effects seems imminent.

The flounces are, indeed, reminiscent of the Traviata scheme of dress rather than of the modified effects which were very popular less than twelve months ago. In other words, the skirt does not boast of more than three flounces and sometimes of only two, and these are cut very full and are usually distended by a reed or hoop to give a greater resemblance to the style of dress worn by the heroine of Verdi's popular opera.

It will be recalled that very few of the artists singing the title role of that opera essay to dress it consistently. Generally speaking, the soprano prefer to appear in extremely modern garb, which does not look as incongruous as it might for the fact that all the subordinates do likewise.

The one brilliant exception to this inartistic rule during recent years is found in the Traviata of Melba, who lent sartorial distinction to herself and to the production by wearing the sort of clothes that fitted the period which Verdi had in mind when he wrote the opera—the story of which he borrowed from Dumas' "Dame aux Camellias."

Incidentally, it may be said that one of the foremost couturiers to Paris has built a gown on the very lines of Camille's operatic dress. This model is included in the collection that was recently sent to America by the French syndicate formed for the protection of French dressmaking in all its varied branches.

Bulfox is responsible for the wonderful Traviata dress, which is made of yellow satin brocaded in silver threads and trimmed with silver lace. It has the tight waist line, the sloping shoulder and the bouffant skirt, characteristic of the type of dress which it seeks to revive.

It seems that just now the woman of fashion selects an evening gown of yellow, rose, purple or Garibaldi red when she does not favor all black or black and white. Earlier in the season it was thought that the pastel shades would be in wide evidence, and although they are seen here and there at the opera, the theater and private social functions, they by no means indicate the trend of fashion.



PHOTO BY INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE

Modish dress of white cloth with unique pocket effect. The collar is extreme in design and the muff decoration adds to the charm of the costume.

Black velvet is very often combined with black tulle by way of marked fabric contrast. For instance, a very unusual model has the skirt of black velvet dropped with an irregular hem beneath a long shawl drape of tulle which is bordered with fur. The fur serves not only as a decoration, but it keeps the hem in an outstanding and, therefore, very modish line.

The net, by the way, is interspersed with bands of white crystal beads that illuminate it in a most fascinating manner. This beaded garniture likewise manifests itself on the bodice. The latter is cut with a square neck and without sleeves. Over the shoulders are passed bands of crystals.

Mention must be made of the pantallettes of white net which are so shaped that the wearer may regulate their length. In other words, the newest outer garments may be worn ankle length or extend half way between the knee and ankle. The irregular edge of the skirt hem insures glimpses of the eastern substitute for the petticoat, no matter in which length it is worn.

Quite a little gray has been used in the composition of afternoon and evening frocks. The fabrics most liked are chiffon, Georgette crepe, tulle and soft satin. It is a fad just now to trim the gray frock with fox that has been dyed just the tone of the fabric. As a matter of fact, gray fox is one of the smartest and newest things in the fur realm.

A girlish afternoon dress is offered in a model made of gray chiffon, which is encircled by flounces of finely plaited gray taffeta. These flounces are applied so as to show band-like revelation of the foundation fabric. The skirt escapes the ground by about seven inches and thus adds to its youthful suggestion.

The bodice has a deep bust band of flowered silk in tones of petunia, yellow and white, which make a delightful foil for the gray background. Over this is worn a sort of jumper smock, made of the chiffon and embroidered in gray crystal beads. Either side of the jumper is extended below the waist line to form a deep pocket, and these points are tipped with crystal tassels. The sleeves are wrist length, made of the chiffon and rather wide.

High gray shoes should be worn with this sort of dress; or, if one prefers, the shoes may be low, made of suede or glazed kid and completed by silk laces, both the latter and the low shoes should be of the gown color.



PHOTO BY INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE

Leather skating coat of American beaver, collar of black velvet, trod leather buttons (on the right).

Anita Stewart's Talks to Girls

No. 7—Some of the Temptations in the Office and on the Stage.

By ANITA STEWART.

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A great many parents object to their daughters going on the stage or in business because of the dangers that they picture the girls as encountering at every step. They think that the only way they can keep their little ewe lambs safe is to keep them within the shelter of the home fold.

Personally, I think that most of the perils of the stage and office, of which we hear so much, are all nonsense. Of course, there are stage door Johnnies and "angels" with nefarious designs, and flirtatious employers, but these are few and far between, and perfectly easy to avoid, unless a girl is one of the kind that has gone out hunting for temptation.

What most people seem to overlook is the fact that the stage and the business office are nothing but workshops for those who earn their livings in them, and that the girl actresses and the stenographers are just part of the tool of the trade with which a man makes a successful deal, or a play that is a hit.

He isn't thinking of her in terms of femininity. He is thinking of her in terms of achievement. Neither is the girl thinking of the man as a man. She is thinking of him as a stepping stone to something higher in her work, or as a means to attain through her good work to a better salary.

Moreover, it takes all the concentrated thought and intelligence any man has got to hold his own in his work in these days of fierce competition, and he has no leisure to philander in business hours. He saves his love making, as he does his playing, until after the day's work is done. The result is that, on the average, just about as much flirtation goes on in a business office as in a convent.

It's true that once in a blue moon there is an exception to this rule, and the girl does get in an office where the employer

is a cad who thinks that a kiss goes with the job, but she doesn't have to stay. She can put on her hat and walk out, just as she can call the policeman to get rid of the attentions of any annoyance that hangs about a stage door.

And that's the heart of the whole matter. Whether a girl goes straight or crooked is in her own hands, and her environment hasn't very much to do with it, not nearly so much as most people think. A girl doesn't have to go away from home to look for danger. She can find it right in her own drawing room if she's one of the adventurers who thinks it fun to see how near the edge of the precipice she can walk without toppling over.

Of course if a girl is silly, and has been brought up by a goose of a mother who thinks ignorance is innocence, and that the best way to keep a girl from falling into the pits along the road she must travel is not to tell her a word about there being any pits, why, naturally she should be kept at home under lock and key. It's the only safe way.

But if the girl is a sensible, level-headed, clear-eyed American girl, and if she's been raised by a mother who has taught her good principles, and who has pointed out the most dangerous curves in the road, why, you can trust that sort of a girl to go anywhere, and come out with flying colors.

And there's this funny thing about men, too—and it's just as true of the men you meet in society as it is in your work—when you first meet them, every mother's son of them will try to find out whether you are glad and giddy, or not.

And if they find out that you are not, ninety-nine times out of a hundred they will turn right around and help you, and be glad that you are good.

Perhaps there are cases where the villain still pursues, but I have never seen it in real life. So far as my observation and experience go, any girl with an inch of backbone and a desire to run straight is just as safe on the stage or in business as she would be at home. Living right is a personal matter, after all.

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Character

By LYMAN P. POWELL, President of Hobart College.

(From his annual address before the Phi Beta Kappa society at Cornell University.)

Character is the power to stand alone, even if all about take another point of view.

Character is social grace. It is the ability ordinarily to get on with others, to turn the chance acquaintance into a real friend. It is no by-product of a model college to stand alone when there is no need. That is, in fact, merely an idiosyncrasy, having no connection with college and never a by-product of the model college.

Character is the ability to see the point of view of others, and a quick readiness to admit that one may possibly be wrong.

Character includes even tact and pleasant address and quick forgetfulness of untoward things. How to the line we must, to have the highest character, but, as has been truly hinted, there is no need to pick up chips.

Character includes the power to discriminate between good and evil, between the important and the trivial, between the service of others and the thought of self, between good citizenship and bad, or, as has too often been said with truth of college men, indifferent selfishness, between thoroughness and superficiality, between truth and falsehood.

Character gives an absorbing interest in life. It is one of the most important by-products of our best colleges that out of many interests in life the graduate chooses one and gives himself with a sense of proportion to that single interest.

No normal person can go through a modern college in these days and not get this feeling of absorption in one thing to the exclusion of many other things perhaps as important, but to which he cannot devote himself without inviting the humorous counsel of Mr. Crothers that there are so many significant things in life today that we ought to concentrate on all.

One can be an optimist and yet make all these distinctions and hold in mind all these considerations for optimism, after all, is trained forgetfulness of many things; it is the highest motive of real research; it is the emphasis of the true, the beautiful, the good.

I like to think of that wise woman who in giving counsel to a friend in need of it remarked: "I never pick up things that do not belong to me, not even slights."

Again, character is coming to be regarded as having a closer dependence than in the past on a properly trained body. The model college has no place for the "unsifted loaf," and President Foster of Reed college is entirely correct in a judgment to which we are trying to contribute both at Cornell and at Hobart—that everybody should have physical training.

Perhaps all institutions will one day agree to abolish intercollegiate sports. I am not yet ready to suggest that credit be given in the college curriculum for physical training, important as it is. I am impressed by the fact that men who have graduated recently seem physically more fit than earlier graduates. Statistics seem to justify this view. As much can meanwhile be gained in colleges with a history, if we think of physical development, as a by-product, as though we give it college credit.

Why should we not? When we think deeply into the mysteries of life we find that all the things worth while are by-products. Did you ever know anybody to find happiness by seeking it? Duty done faithfully when sometimes weariness is the day's toll may lead on to that bright star in the sunset whose other name is joy; but whether it does or not, the duty must be done and every college should make sure that among its many important by-products is the training of the body as a proper setting for the higher life and an aid to the achievement of the same.